GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3496
ANSWERED ON:14.08.2001
CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS INCHARGE FROM SAARC COUNTRIES
VILAS BABURAO MUTTEMWAR

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Conference of Ministers Incharge of Women and Child Development from the SAARC countries was held recently in Kathmandu to assess the progress made in achieving the goals set out at the 1990 World Summit for Children;

(b) if so, whether India had also participated in the said Conference;

(c) if so, the conclusion of the Conference and the efforts made by the Government to implement those conclusions; and

(d) the details of the recommendations of the 1990 World Summit?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a) A high level meeting of South Asian countries was held in Kathmandu from 22nd to 23rd May, 2001 to have a regional consultation before the World Summit for Children to be held in New York in September, 2001.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The conclusions of the Conference are:

(i) To reaffirm our commitments to accelerate progress to achieve the goals for children agreed at the World Summit for Children in 1990 and the 1996 SAARC Ministerial Conference on Children;

(ii) To support and call for increasingly greater investment in children;

(iii) To recognize the need to listen to children and actively explore ways of involving them in decisions that affect them at all levels and inculcate sound values in children;

(iv) To recognize the importance of partnerships between Government, private and corporate sector, civil society organizations, communities, individuals, children, international organizations and media;

(v) To call for the sharing of national experiences and best practices, and regional strategies, which reach families and communities at the grassroots level for fulfilling the rights of children.

(d) The World Summit for Children, 1990 set goals for children which were to be achieved by the member countries by the year 2000. The details of the goals are placed at Annexure.

ANNEXURE

GOALS OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN, 1990

I. Major Goals for Child Survival, Development and Protection

(a) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of infant and under-5 child mortality rate by one third or to 50 and 70 per 1,000 live births respectively, whichever is less;

(b) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of maternal mortality rate by half;

(c) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition among under-5 children by half;

(d) Universal access to safe drinking water and to sanitary means of excreta disposal;

(e) By the year 2000, universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school-age children;

(f) Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to at least half its 1990 level with emphasis on female literacy;

(g) Improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances.

II. Supporting/sectoral Goals

A. Women`s health and education

(i) Special attention to the health and nutrition of the female child and to pregnant and lactating women;

(ii) Access by all couples to information and services to prevent pregnancies that are too early, too closely spaced, too late or too many;

(iii) Access by all pregnant women to pre-natal care, trained attendants during childbirth and referral facilities for high-risk pregnancies and obstetric emergencies;

(iv) Universal access to primary education with special emphasis for girls and accelerated literacy programmes for women.

B. Nutrition

(i) Reduction in severe, as well as moderate malnutrition among under-5 children by half of 1990 levels;

(ii) Reduction of the rate of low birth weight (2.5 kg or less) to less than 10 per cent;

(iii) Reduction of iron deficiency anaemia in women by one third of the 1990 levels;

(iv) Virtual elimination of iodine deficiency disorders;

(v) Virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency and its consequences, including blindness;

(vi) Empowerment of all women to breast-feed their children exclusively for four to six months and to continue breastfeeding, with complementary food, well into the second year;

(vii) Growth promotion and its regular monitoring to be institutionalized in all countries by the end of the 1990s;

(viii) Dissemination of knowledge and supporting services to increase food production to ensure household food security.

C. Child health

(i) Global eradication of poliomyelitis by the year 2000;

(ii) Elimination of neonatal tetanus by 1995;

(iii) Reduction by 95 per cent in measles deaths and reduction by 90 per cent of measles cases compared to pre- immunization levels by 1995, as a major step to the global eradication of measles in the longer run;

(iv) Maintenance of a high level of immunization coverage (at least 90 per cent of children under one year of age by the year 2000) against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis and against tetanus for women of child-bearing age;

(v) Reduction by 50 per cent in the deaths due to diarrhoea in children under the age of five years and 25 per cent reduction in the diarrhoea incidence rate;

(vi) Reduction by one third in the deaths due to acute respiratory infections in children under five years.

D. Water and sanitation

(i) Universal access to safe drinking water;

(ii) Universal access to sanitary means of excreta disposal;

(iii) Elimination of guinea-worm disease (dracunculiasis) by the year 2000.

E. Basic education

(i) Expansion of early childhood development activities, including appropriate low-cost family- and community-based interventions;

(ii) Universal access to basic education, and achievement of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school- age children through formal schooling or non- formal education of comparable learning standard, with emphasis on reducing the current disparities between boys and girls;

(iii) Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to at least half its 1990 level, with emphasis on female literacy;

(iv) Increased acquisition by individuals and families of the knowledge, skills and values required for better living, made available through all educational channels, including the mass media, other forms of modern and traditional communication and social action, with effectiveness measured in terms of behavioural change.

F. Children in difficult circumstances

Provide improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances and tackle the root causes leading to such situations.